

Description

Evaluation circuit and method for detecting and/or
5 locating faulty data words in a data stream T_n

Integrated circuits, in particular fast digital interface circuits/interfaces are often subjected to one or more production tests as early as during the 10 production method, in which production test or production tests test patterns are applied to the integrated circuit and the data stream generated by the integrated circuit in a manner dependent on said test patterns is examined.

15 Production tests in which faulty integrated circuits can be reliably discovered and sorted out in good time have a comparatively long duration and require a high complexity.

20 In customary production tests, in which the data streams are compressed or compacted for time and cost reasons, it is often not possible for faulty integrated circuits to be ascertained as early as during a 25 production test, so that faulty integrated circuits often pass through even further manufacturing stations before being identified as faulty. If faulty integrated circuits are not identified during the production test or production tests, but only at a later point in time 30 in the production method, high costs arise e.g. due to the reduced production yield.

If a faulty circuit has been identified with production tests operating with compressed or compacted data 35 streams, it is still not possible to make a statement about which location or which region caused this error. This has to be detected by sorting out the faulty circuit and by means of a separate test run.

It is an object of the present invention to provide a device and also a method enabling production-accompanying checking of integrated circuits, in the case of which errors present in the 5 tested circuits can be reliably identified and precisely located.

This object is achieved by means of the subject matter of the independent patent claims. Advantageous 10 developments of the invention emerge from the respective subclaims.

The evaluation circuit according to the invention is provided for detecting and/or locating faulty data 15 words in a data stream T_n . It has a first linear automaton circuit and also a second linear automaton circuit connected in parallel, each having a set of states $z(t)$. These linear automaton circuits are, in particular, linear feedback shift registers having a 20 multiple input linear feedback shift register architecture/MILFSR architecture.

Both linear automaton circuits are equipped with a common input line for receiving a data stream T_n 25 comprising n successive data words $y(1), \dots, y(n)$ each having a width of k bits. Arbitrary test data can be applied to said input line, it being necessary for the good signature of the ideal error-free test data to be known. The first linear automaton circuit is described 30 by the equation

$$z(t+1) = Az(t) \oplus y(t)$$

and the second linear automaton circuit is described by 35 the equation

$$z(t+1) = Bz(t) \oplus y(t)$$

In this case, A and B represent the state matrices of the linear automaton circuits.

The two linear automaton circuits can calculate a first
5 signature S1 and a second signature S2, respectively,
either directly from the data words $y(1), \dots, y(n)$ of
the data stream T_n or, if appropriate, from already
coded data words $u^1(1), \dots, u^1(n)$ and $u^2(1), \dots,$
 $u^2(n)$, respectively.

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In this document, signature is understood to mean a compacting of a set of data words. From these signatures it is possible to calculate back to the faulty data words.

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These calculated signatures S1 and S2 are compared in each case with an error-free good signature by means of a first logic combination gate arranged downstream of the first linear automaton circuit and by means of a
20 second logic combination gate arranged downstream of the second linear automaton circuit. At the outputs of the logic combination gates, it is possible to tap off a comparison value with the good signatures, which enables a conclusion to be drawn regarding whether the
25 data stream T_n under consideration has no, one or more faulty data words $y'(i)$.

In accordance with a basic concept of the invention, the number of faulty data words $y'(i)$ in the data
30 stream T_n can thus be deduced directly from the signatures of a data stream T_n .

If, in the data stream T_n , precisely one faulty data word $y'(i)$ is present in the i-th position of the data
35 stream, which faulty data word differs from the error-free data word $y(i)$ by the error word $e(i)$,
 $y'(i)=y(i) \oplus e(i)$, which is also referred to hereinafter simply as error, where \oplus designates componentwise

addition modulo 2, it is possible according to the invention to determine the position i of the faulty data word $y'(i)$ in the data stream and the error $e(i)$ directly from the differences between the signatures S_1 and S_2 and the corresponding error-free signatures.

The test patterns which, during a production test, are to be transmitted continuously to an output unit and are to be examined are therefore reduced by two or more 10 orders of magnitude in accordance with the invention. For locating errors it is no longer necessary to carry out a comparison of all the data words with the respectively known error-free data words, that is to say a total of $2 \times n$ data words.

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It is likewise possible to conduct production-accompanying error statistics and to evaluate them in order to establish whether faulty components can be detected by means of a data stream 20 reduced in this way.

In a first embodiment of the evaluation circuit, the logic combination gates are designed as exclusive-OR gates whose first input is respectively connected to 25 the output of the associated linear automaton circuit and to whose second input a good signature is to be applied.

According to the invention, the data stream T_n 30 comprising n data words is compacted into two signatures S_1 and S_2 in two different linear feedback shift registers having k parallel inputs. From the two known good signatures GS_1 and GS_2 of the two shift registers for the error-free data stream T_n , the 35 signature differences $\Delta S_1 = GS_1 \oplus S_1$ and $\Delta S_2 = GS_2 \oplus S_2$ are produced by means of exclusive-ORing with the signatures S_1 and S_2 actually determined. These signature differences ΔS_1 and ΔS_2 are used to

determine, for the case where only one data word in the data stream is faulty, the position i of the faulty data word $y'(i)$ in the data stream T_n and the error word $e(i)$, which describes the deviation of the faulty 5 data word $y'(i)$ from the correct data word $y(i)$, $y'(i)=y(i)\oplus e(i)$.

If errors are present in two or more, arbitrarily many data words, then it emerges from the signature 10 differences ΔS_1 and ΔS_2 as the result of the evaluation circuit according to the invention that the data stream T_n is faulty.

In a second embodiment of the invention, the evaluation 15 circuit is provided with a first coder arranged upstream of the first linear automaton circuit. Said first coder codes the data word $y(i)$ having the data word length of k bits for $i=1, \dots, n$ into a coded data word $u^1(i)$, $u^1(i)=\text{Cod}_1(y(i))$ having the word width of K_1 20 bits. In this case, Cod_1 is the coding function of the first coder.

In this case, the coding function Cod_1 of the first coder may be configured such

- 25 - that a function f_1 where $f_1(0)=\bar{0}$ exists for $y'(i) = y(i) \oplus e(i)$,
- that $\text{Cod}_1(y'(i)) = \text{Cod}_1(y(i) \oplus e(i)) = \text{Cod}_1(y(i) \oplus f_1(e(i)))$ or $\text{Cod}_1(y'(i)) = u^1(i) \oplus f_1(e(i))$ holds true,
- 30 - and that there is a function f_1^{-1} , where $f_1^{-1}(f_1(e))=e$, for all possible k -digit binary words e , where e is an error word by which a faulty data word in the data stream T_n may deviate from a correct data word.

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In a further embodiment of the invention, the evaluation circuit is provided with a second coder arranged upstream of the second linear automaton

circuit. Said second coder codes the data word $y(i)$ having the data word length of k bits for $i=1, \dots, n$ into a coded data word $u^2(i)$, $u^2(i)=\text{Cod2}(y(i))$ having the word width of K_2 bits. In this case, Cod2 is the
5 coding function of the second coder.

In this case, the coding function Cod2 of the second coder may be configured such

- that, for $y'(i)$, it holds true that $y'(i) = y(i) \oplus e(i) = \text{Cod2}(y(i)) \oplus f_2(e(i))$ or $\text{Cod2}(y'(i)) = u^2(i) \oplus f_2(e(i))$
- and that a function f_2^{-1} where $f_2^{-1}(f_2(e))=e$ exists.

The coders may also be realized as continuous lines and
15 effect an identical mapping:

$$\text{Cod1}(y(i))=\text{Cod2}(y(i)))=y(i) \text{ for } i=1, \dots, n$$

This configuration corresponds to the already described
20 evaluation circuit without coders.

The evaluation is simplified if the word width K_1 of the data words $u^1(i)$ coded by the first coder is equal to the word width K_2 of the data words $u^2(i)$ coded by
25 the second coder, if the first coder matches the second coder with regard to its construction and its function, and if the word width K_1 of the data words $u^1(i)$ coded by the first coder and the word width K_2 of the data words $u^2(i)$ coded by the second coder are in each case
30 equal to the word width k of the data words $y(1), \dots, y(n)$ of the data stream T_n .

In an advantageous development of the invention, the coding functions Cod1 and Cod2 of the first coder and
35 of the second coder may be designed as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Cod1}(y_1(i), y_2(i), \dots, y_k(i)) \\ = P_1(y_1(i), y_2(i), \dots, y_k(i), 0, \dots, 0) \end{aligned}$$

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Cod2(y1(i), y2(i), ..., yk(i))
= P2(y1(i), y2(i), ..., yk(i), 0, ..., 0)

5      for i, 1, ..., n

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In this case, the number of zeros situated at the end of P1(y₁(i), y₂(i), ..., y_k(i), 0, ..., 0) is equal to (K₁-k), and the number at the end of P2(y₁(i), y₂(i), ..., y_k(i), 0, ..., 0) is equal to (K₂-k). P₁ 10 represents an arbitrary permutation of the K₁ components of (y₁(i), y₂(i), ..., y_k(i), 0, ..., 0) and P₂ represents an arbitrary permutation of the K₂ components of (y₁(i), y₂(i), ..., y_k(i), 0, ..., 0).

15 In this case, only k bits of y₁(i), ..., y_k(i) are input into the K₁=K₂=k+1 bit wide state vectors of the linear automaton circuits by means of XOR elements. No XOR elements are required for inputting the constant values 20 0. This ensures simple adaptation of the word width of the data words to the word width of the states.

In practice, zeros are in this case inserted into the k-bit data word y₁(i), ..., y_k(i)=y(i) at (K₁-k) 25 locations and, respectively, at (K₂-k) locations. The components may also be interchanged by means of the permutations in this case. As a result, the dimension of the linear automaton circuits becomes equal to K₁>k, K₂>k. The probability of an incorrectly identified 30 error thus becomes lower.

In an alternative instance of the evaluation circuit, the coding functions Cod1 and Cod2 of the first coder and of the second coder are designed as follows:

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Cod1(y1(i), y2(i), ..., yk(i))
= P1(y1(i), y2(i), ..., yk(i), b11, ..., bK1-k1)

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$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Cod2}(y_1(i), y_2(i), \dots, y_k(i)) \\ &= P2(y_1(i), y_2(i), \dots, y_k(i), b_i^1, \dots, b_{K2-k}^2) \end{aligned}$$

where $b_i^1, \dots, b_{K1-k}^1, b_i^2, \dots, b_{K2-k}^2 \in \{0,1\}$. In this case, P1 and P2 represent arbitrary permutations. In the practical
5 implementation of this instance of the invention, zeros and ones are inserted into the data word $y_1(i), \dots, y_k(i) = y(i)$ at $K1-k$ ($K2-k$) locations.

It is particularly advantageous if the coding function
10 Cod1 of the first coder and/or the coding function Cod2 of the second coder are designed such that they realize a linear block code, $f_1 = \text{Cod1}$ and $f_2 = \text{Cod2}$, respectively. Linear block codes known to the person skilled in the art may be designed e.g. as Hamming codes, as parity
15 bit codes or as group parity bit codes.

The detecting and the locating of faulty data words in a data stream T_n can be simplified by choosing the linear automaton circuits such that their state
20 matrices A and B are related to one another as follows:

$$B = A^n, \text{ where } n \neq 1,$$

or if the state matrix B of the second linear automaton circuit is equal to the inverted state matrix A^{-1} of the
25 first linear automaton circuit

$$B = A^{-1}$$

30 In a further embodiment of the evaluation circuit, the first linear automaton circuit is present as a linear feedback shift register and the second linear automaton circuit is present as an inverse linear feedback shift register. In this case, both linear automaton circuits
35 have a parallel input.

The linear automaton circuits may also be present as linear feedback, K_1 -dimensional and, respectively, K_2 -dimensional multi-input shift registers, in particular of maximum length.

5

The invention also relates to a method for detecting faulty data words $y'(i)$ in a data stream T_n comprising n data words $y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y'(i), y(i+1), \dots, y(n)$ having the data word width k and/or for locating a faulty data word $y'(i) =$ and a faulty position i of a faulty data word $y'(i) = y(i) \oplus e(i)$.

In this case, the data stream T_n deviates in the i -th position by $e(i)$ from the correct data stream $y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y(i), y(i+1), \dots, y(n)$.

In this case, firstly the data words of the data stream T_n are input into a first coder having the coding function Cod1 and the decoding function Decod1 . The first coder codes the data words $y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y'(i), y(i+1), \dots, y(n)$ into the coded data words $u^1(1), \dots, u^1(i-1), u^1(i), u^1(i), \dots, u^1(n)$ having the word width K_1 where $K_1 \geq k$.

For $y'(i) = y(i) \oplus e(i)$, a function f_1 exists in such a way that $f_1(0)=0$ and $\text{Cod1}(y'(i)) = \text{Cod1}(y(i) \oplus e(i)) = \text{Cod1}(y(i) \oplus f_1(e(i)))$ hold true, and that there is a function $f_1^{-1}(f(e))=e$ for all fundamentally possible k -digit errors where $f_1^{-1}(f_1(e))$.

30

The data words coded in this way are then input into the inputs of a first linear automaton circuit with K_1 -dimensional state vector z^1 .

The first linear automaton circuit is described by the automaton equation

$$z^1(t+1) = A \cdot z^1(t) + u^1(t) \quad (\text{I})$$

Its matrix A is in the form of $K_1 \times K_1$ matrix with binary coefficient, so that an inverse matrix A^{-1} exists and the additions and multiplications in (1) are effected modulo 2.

When $y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y(i), y(i+1), \dots, y(n)$ is input into the coder and thus when $u^1(1), \dots, u^1(i-1), u^1(i), u^1(i+1), \dots, u^1(n)$ is input into the first linear automaton circuit, the first linear automaton circuit undergoes transition to the state $z^1(n+1) = S(L_1, y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y(i), y(i+1), \dots, y(n))$.

When the input $y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y'(i), \dots, y(n)$ that is faulty in the i-th position is input into the coder and thus when $u^1(1), \dots, u^1(i-1), u^{1'}(i), \dots, u^1(n)$ is input into the first linear automaton circuit, the latter undergoes transition to the state $z^{1'}(n+1) = S(L_1, y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y'(i), y(i+1), \dots, y(n))$.

In this case, the signatures of the correct and faulty data sequences are respectively designated by $S(L_1, y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y(i), y(i+1), \dots, y(n))$ and by $S(L_1, y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y'(i), y(i+1), \dots, y(n))$.

This signature of the data stream T_n can be compared with a known good signature. If this comparison yields no deviation indicating at least one faulty data word $y'(i)$, then the data stream T_n is with high probability free of errors. In this case, the method according to the invention is begun from the outset again with a new data stream T_n .

If, by contrast, a deviation indicating at least one faulty data word $y'(i)$ is detected, then the method continues with the next method step, in which the data words $y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y'(i), \dots, y(n)$ of the data

stream T_n are input in a second coder having the coding function Cod2 and the decoding function Decod2.

- 5 The inputting of the data stream T_n into the second coder is in practice usually effected at the same time as the inputting into the first coder. If the same data stream T_n can also be made available twice in a temporally offset fashion, the inputting into the coders may also be effected one after the other. In
10 this embodiment, it is advantageous that only one coder and only one linear automaton circuit have to be available, which are used twice in succession for the same data stream T_n .
- 15 In this case, the second coder and the second automaton circuit may be obtained by means of a simple modification from the first coder and from the first automaton circuit.
- 20 The second coder codes the data words $y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y'(i), y(i+1), \dots, y(n)$ into the coded data words $u^2(1), \dots, u^2(i-1), u^2'(i), u^2(i+1)$ having the data word width $K_2, K_2 \geq k$.
- 25 The following holds true in this case for $y'(i)$:

$$\text{Cod2}(y'(i)) = \text{Cod2}(y(i) \oplus e(i)) = \text{Cod2}(y(i)) \oplus f_2(e(i))$$

A function f_2^{-1} where $f_2^{-1}(f_2(e)) = e$ exists.

- 30 The data words coded in this way are input into the inputs of a second linear automaton circuit with K_2 -dimensional state vector z^2 . The latter is described by the following automaton equation:

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$$z^2(t+1) = B \cdot z^2(t) \oplus u^2(t) \quad (\text{VII})$$

The matrix B of the second linear automaton circuit where $B \neq A$ is a $K_2 \times K_2$ matrix with binary coefficient for which an inverse matrix B^{-1} exists. The additions and multiplications in (VII) are effected modulo 2.

5

When the correct data sequence $y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y(i), y(i+1), \dots, y(n)$ is input into the second coder and when the coded sequence $u^1(1), \dots, u^1(i-1), u^1(i), u^1(i+1), \dots, u^1(n)$ is input, the second linear automaton circuit undergoes transition to the state $z^2(n+1) = S(L_2, y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y(i), y(i+1), \dots, y(n))$.

10

When the faulty data sequence $y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y'(i), y(i+1), \dots, y(n)$ is input into the second coder and when the coded sequence $u^2(1), \dots, u^2(i-1), u^2(i), u^2(i+1), \dots, u^2(n)$ is input into the second linear automaton circuit, the latter undergoes transition to the state $z^2(n+1) = S(L_2, y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y(i), y'(i), y(i+1), \dots, y(n))$.

15

In this case, the signatures of the correct and faulty data sequences are respectively designated by $S(L_2, y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y(i), y(i+1), \dots, y(n))$ and by $S(L_2, y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y'(i), \dots, y(n))$.

20

The signature differences ΔS_1 and ΔS_2 can now be determined, to be precise from the determined signatures S_1 and S_2 and from the predetermined good signatures. This calculation of the signature differences ΔS_1 and ΔS_2 is effected e.g. by componentwise exclusive-ORings of the signatures S_1 and S_2 with the predetermined good signatures.

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The signature differences ΔS_1 and ΔS_2 are defined as follows.

$\Delta S1 = S(L1, y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y(i), y(i+1), \dots, y(n)) \oplus S(L1, y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y'(i), y(i+1), \dots, y(n))$

5 and

$\Delta S2 = S(L2, y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y(i), y(i+1), \dots, y(n)) \oplus S(L2, y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y'(i), y(i+1), \dots, y(n))$

10

In this case, the signatures are XORed in a componentwise fashion.

15

The following method steps can be performed by an external calculation unit, e.g. a computer system, using the values determined up to this point in time in the method.

20

It is then possible, if precisely one faulty data word is present, to calculate back to its position i , to be precise by determining a unique solution for the position i of the faulty data word by solving the equation

25

$$f_1^{-1}(A^{i-n}\Delta S1) = f_2^{-1}(B^{i-n}\Delta S2) \quad (\text{XVI})$$

The value of the position i can be uniquely determined from equation (XVI).

30

If no unique solution results for i , an output medium outputs a notification that two or more errors are present in the data stream T_n under consideration.

35

If the value of the position i has been calculated, then it is also possible to determine a unique solution for all the bits of the faulty data word $e(i)$ in the data stream T_n , to be precise by solving the equation

$$e(i) = f_1^{-1}(A^{i-n} \cdot \Delta S1) \quad (\text{XIV})$$

The value for $e(i)$ is defined from equation (XIV) for the value determined from (XVI) for $i \in \{1, \dots, n\}$.

5

The position i of the faulty data word $y'(i)$ and also the errors e in the data stream T_n may be made available by an output medium, e.g. by a screen or by a printer.

10

The method steps of the method described above can be carried out by means of an evaluation circuit according to the invention that has already been described whose outputs at which the signature differences $\Delta S1$ and $\Delta S2$ are provided are connected, if appropriate, to an external calculation unit, e.g. a computer system, which carries out the calculating-back steps.

20

The invention also relates to an integrated circuit to be tested on which is contained an evaluation circuit according to the invention in one of the embodiments described above, in particular in addition to the normal circuit as it were as an add-on. In this case, the evaluation circuit according to the invention is monolithically integrated on the integrated circuit or on the semiconductor component.

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The invention also relates to a needle card for testing integrated circuits, in which is integrated an evaluation circuit according to the invention in one of the embodiments described above.

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The invention furthermore relates to a tester-specific loadboard with test holders for inserting integrated circuits or for receiving such a needle card or for connecting a handler, at least one evaluation circuit according to the invention in one of the embodiments described above being integrated on the loadboard. Such

a loadboard may also be referred to as an adaptor board.

The evaluation circuit according to the invention may
5 also be integrated directly on a tester/measuring device/test system/automatic test machine for testing integrated circuits. Such a tester is provided with a plurality of instruments for generating signals or data streams and with a plurality of measuring sensors, in
10 particular for currents and voltages, and the tester has a loadboard which is provided for receiving at least one needle card for testing integrated circuits and/or for connecting a handler to a tester of integrated circuits and/or which is equipped with at
15 least one test socket for testing integrated circuits.

In accordance with a further basic concept of the invention, the evaluation circuit according to the invention, in all the embodiments described above, can
20 be provided simply and in a very space-saving manner on all possible circuits or devices in any abstraction level or at any measuring device level. Adverse effects on the functioning do not arise in this case. The concrete configuration of the above-described subject
25 matters with such an evaluation circuit emerges for the person skilled in the art completely and unambiguously from the information contained in this patent specification and also from his expert knowledge. In this case, it is merely necessary to take account of
30 the fact that the evaluation circuit according to the invention is in each case to be applied in addition to the circuits contained on the abovementioned subject matters.

35 The invention is also realized in a computer program for executing the method for detecting and/or locating faulty data words in a data stream T_n . In this case, the computer program contains program instructions that

cause a computer system to execute such a test method in an embodiment described above.

In this case, in particular the method steps of
5 generating and inputting data words $y(1), \dots, y(i-1)$,
 $y'(i)$, $y(i+1), \dots, y(n)$ of a data stream T_n into the
evaluation circuit and also the steps of calculating
back to the position of the faulty data word $y'(i)$ and
the error e from the signature differences ΔS_1 and ΔS_2
10 are controlled by means of a computer system or carried
out on a computer system itself. The computer program
outputs the results as digital data sequences or in a
form of representation generated therefrom on an output
unit, in particular on a screen or on a printer, or
15 stores these result data in a memory area. The computer
program according to the invention enables faulty data
words to be determined rapidly, effectively and
reliably, resulting in a significant acceleration of
the test execution time.
20

The invention additionally relates to a computer
program which is contained on a storage medium, in
particular in a computer memory or in a random access
memory, or which is transmitted on an electrical
25 carrier signal. The invention also relates to a carrier
medium, in particular a data carrier, such as, for
example, a floppy disk, a Zip drive, a streamer, a CD
or a DVD, on which a computer program described above
is stored. Furthermore, the invention relates to a
30 computer system on which such a computer program is
stored. Finally, the invention also relates to a
download method in which such a computer program is
downloaded from an electronic data network, such as
e.g. from the Internet, onto a computer connected to
35 the data network.

The invention is illustrated in more detail in the
drawings on the basis of an exemplary embodiment.

Figure 1 shows a first measurement data flow representation with n error-free data words $y(1), y(2), \dots, y(n)$,

5 Figure 2 shows a second measurement data flow representation with a faulty measurement data word $y'(i)$,

Figure 3 shows a schematic illustration of a first linear automaton circuit,

10 Figure 4 shows a schematic illustration of a second linear automaton circuit,

Figure 5 shows a sequential scheme for determining signature differences ΔS_1 and ΔS_2 from a measurement data stream T_n ,

15 Figure 6 shows a flowchart for illustrating the method according to the invention for detecting an error $e(i)$ in a data word $y(i)$.

Figure 1 shows a first measurement data flow representation 1.

The first measurement data flow representation 1 comprises a pseudorandom measurement data stream T_n , which is illustrated in rectangular fashion in figure 1 and is subdivided into n successive data words $y(1), y(2), \dots, y(n)$ each having an identical data word length of k bits.

An input having the bit width k is shown on the left of the first measurement data flow representation 1, at which input the measurement data words $y(1), y(2), \dots, y(n)$ are output e.g. from a tested integrated circuit in each case in clocked fashion. Therefore, the measurement data words having the higher indices are arranged further on the left in figure 1. Such a tested integrated circuit is also referred to hereinafter as Device Under Test/DUT.

An output having the bit width k is illustrated on the right of the first measurement data flow representation 1, via which output the measurement data are forwarded to a shift register 11. The shift register 11 is a
5 shift register with a multiple input linear feedback shift register architecture or with an MILFSR architecture. All n data words are intended to be compressed in a single data word having the length of k bits by means of the shift register 11. The
10 specification for the mapping of n data words $y(1), y(2), \dots, y(n)$ into a single signature is given in equation (1).

$$S(1 \rightarrow n) = S(y(1), y(2), \dots, y(n)) \quad (1)$$

15

The initial state $z(t_0)$ of the shift register 11 with the MILFSR architecture is given by the zero vector 0, $z(t_0) = 0$.

20 Figure 2 shows a second measurement data flow representation 2 with a faulty measurement data word $y'(i)$.

25 The second measurement data flow representation 2 differs from the first measurement data flow representation 1 by virtue of the fact that its data stream T_n has an error $e(i)$ in the i-th data word $y'(i)$ of the data stream T_n .

30 If such an error $e(i)$ is present in the data word $y'(i)$ of the data stream T_n , the specification for the mapping of n data words $y(1), y(2), \dots, y(n)$ by the signature of the shift register 11 is given by equation (2).

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$$S(1 \rightarrow n, i, e) = S(y(1), y(2), \dots, e(i), \dots, y(n)) \quad (2)$$

This signature is then generated from the data words $y(1), y(2), \dots, e(i), \dots, y(n)$ by means of the shift register 11. The shift register 11 has the MILFSR architecture already mentioned with reference to
5 figure 1.

Through skillful comparison of the signatures $S(y(1), y(2), \dots, e(i), \dots, y(n))$ in equation (1) and $S(y(1), y(2), \dots, e(i), \dots, y(n))$ in equation (2), it
10 is possible to calculate back to the position i of the faulty data word $y'(i)$ and to the error $e(i)$, that is to say to all of its faulty bits $e(i)$.

If a known digital test response of a DUT contains
15 precisely one error $e(i)$ in the i -th data word of the data stream, then the data word $y'(i)$ and all the faulty bits of its error $e(i)$ can be obtained with the aid of the mapping $S(l \rightarrow n, i, e)$ calculated from an MILFSR architecture. This is done at an instant $t > n$
20 at which the data words $y(1), y(2), \dots, y(n)$ of the data stream T_n are no longer available or are no longer required.

In accordance with the present invention, only 2
25 signatures, that is to say 2 k-bit data words, need be evaluated for the test, for the diagnosis and for the error correction of an error in an arbitrary data word of the data stream T_n comprising n k-bit data words.

30 Figure 3 shows a schematic illustration of a first linear automaton circuit L1.

The first linear automaton circuit L1 comprises four states z_1, z_2, z_3 and z_4 , which are illustrated in
35 rectangular fashion in figure 3 and are arranged respectively one after the other and are stored in storage elements, e.g. D-type flip-flops. Provided upstream of the first state z_1 and in each case between

the states z_2 , z_3 and z_4 are four exclusive-OR gates XOR_1 , XOR_2 , XOR_3 and XOR_4 , the first inputs of which are respectively formed by four measurement data lines y_1 , y_2 , y_3 and y_4 and the outputs of which are connected to
5 the respective subsequent states z_1 , z_2 , z_3 and z_4 .

The second input of the second OR gate XOR_2 is connected to the output of the first state z_1 . The second input of the third OR gate XOR_3 is formed by the
10 output of the second state z_2 . The second input of the fourth OR gate XOR_4 is formed by the output of the third state z_3 .

Attached to the output of the fourth state z_4 is a
15 first output line 30, which forks into a first feedback line 31 and into a second feedback line 32. The first feedback line 31 forms the third input of the second XOR gate XOR_2 , and the second feedback line 32 forms the second input of the first XOR gate XOR_1 .

20 The first linear automaton circuit L_1 is accordingly designed as a shift register exhibiting feedback with a primitive polynomial and having four states z_1 , z_2 , z_3 and z_4 .

25 The state equations of the first linear automaton circuit L_1 are calculated from the states $z(t+1)$ at the instant $t+1$ in a manner dependent on the states $z(t)$ at the instant t . Equations (3) - (6) hold true for the
30 first linear automaton circuit L_1 :

$$z_1(t+1) = z_4(t) \oplus y_1(t) \quad (3)$$

$$z_2(t+1) = z_1(t) \oplus z_4(t) \oplus y_2(t) \quad (4)$$

$$z_3(t+1) = z_2(t) \oplus y_3(t) \quad (5)$$

35 $z_4(t+1) = z_3(t) \oplus y_4(t) \quad (6)$

The following results with A as a state matrix:

$$z(t+1) = Az(t) \oplus y(t) \quad (7)$$

where

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 0001 \\ 1001 \\ 0100 \\ 0010 \end{bmatrix}, \quad z(t+1) = \begin{bmatrix} z_1(t+1) \\ z_2(t+1) \\ z_3(t+1) \\ z_4(t+1) \end{bmatrix}, \quad z(t) = \begin{bmatrix} z_1(t) \\ z_2(t) \\ z_3(t) \\ z_4(t) \end{bmatrix}, \quad y(t) = \begin{bmatrix} y_1(t) \\ y_2(t) \\ y_3(t) \\ y_4(t) \end{bmatrix}$$

5

The autonomous behavior of the first linear automaton circuit L1 is calculated from equation (7) where $y(t)=0$ as

10

$$z(t+1) = Az(t) \quad (8)$$

Equations (3) - (8) are also referred to as successor equations.

15

It follows from equations (3), (5) and (6), where $y_i(t) = 0$ for $i \in \{1, 2, 3, 4\}$, that:

$$z_4(t) = z_1(t+1) \quad (9)$$

$$20 \quad z_2(t) = z_3(t+1) \quad (10)$$

$$z_3(t) = z_4(t+1) \quad (11)$$

It follows from equation (9), inserted into equation (4), that:

25

$$z_2(t+1) = z_1(t+1) \oplus z_1(t)$$

and

$$30 \quad z_1(t+1) \oplus z_2(t+1) = z_1(t+1) \oplus z_1(t+1) \oplus z_1(t)$$

This results in the following:

$$z_1(t) = z_1(t+1) \oplus z_2(t+1) \quad (12)$$

Equations (9) - (12) are referred to as predecessor equations of the linear automaton circuit L1 for the input 0 or else as autonomous predecessor equations of
5 the linear automaton circuit L1.

In matrix notation, the following predecessor equations are obtained analogously to the successor equations in (8) from (9) - (12)

10

$$z(t) = A^{-1} z(t+1) \quad (13)$$

where $A^{-1} = \begin{bmatrix} 1100 \\ 0010 \\ 0001 \\ 1000 \end{bmatrix}$

15 A^{-1} is the inverse matrix with respect to A. Multiplication of A and A^{-1} produces the unit matrix E.

$$A^{-1} A = E \text{ where } E = \begin{bmatrix} 1000 \\ 0100 \\ 0010 \\ 0001 \end{bmatrix}$$

Figure 4 shows a schematic illustration of a second linear automaton circuit L2.

20

With regard to the signal direction, the second linear automaton circuit L2 is illustrated in mirror-inverted fashion with respect to the first linear automaton circuit L1.

25

Like the first linear automaton circuit L1, the second linear automaton circuit L2 comprises four states z_1 , z_2 , z_3 , z_4 , four exclusive-OR gates XOR_1 , XOR_2 , XOR_3 and XOR_4 , and also four measurement data lines y_1 , y_2 , y_3 and

y_4 which respectively form the first inputs of the exclusive-OR gates XOR_1 , XOR_2 , XOR_3 and XOR_4 .

5 The exclusive -OR gates XOR_1 , XOR_2 , XOR_3 and XOR_4 are situated upstream of the fourth state z_4 and respectively between the states z_1 , z_2 and z_3 . The outputs of the exclusive-OR gates XOR_1 , XOR_2 , XOR_3 and XOR_4 are connected to the respective subsequent states z_1 , z_2 , z_3 and z_4 .

10

The output of the first state z_1 forms a second output line 40, which is divided into a third feedback line 41 and into a fourth feedback line 42. The third feedback line 41 leads into the first exclusive-OR gate XOR_1 and 15 the fourth feedback line 42 leads into the fourth exclusive-OR gate XOR_1 .

20 Like the first linear automaton circuit L1, the second linear automaton circuit L2 is also designed as a shift register exhibiting feedback with a primitive polynomial and having four states z_1 , z_2 , z_3 and z_4 .

The state equation of the second linear automaton circuit L2 is given in equation (15).

25

$$z(t+1) = B z(t) \oplus y(t) \quad (15)$$

where

$$B = \begin{bmatrix} 1100 \\ 0010 \\ 0001 \\ 1000 \end{bmatrix} = A^{-1} \quad (16)$$

30

B is the inverse matrix of A.

For an assumed error $e(i)$ in a k-bit data word $y'(i)$ of the data stream T_n from figure 2, there is obtained from the mapping specification in accordance with equation (2)

5

$$S(1 \rightarrow n, i, e) = S(y(1), y(2), \dots, y(i) \oplus e(i), \dots, y(n)) \quad (17)$$

and by application of the superposition principle in the case of linear automata

10

$$\begin{aligned} S(1 \rightarrow n, i, e) &= S(y(1), y(2), \dots, y(n)) \oplus \\ &S(0, 0, \dots, e(i), \dots, 0) \end{aligned}$$

or

15

$$S(1 \rightarrow n, i, e) = S(1 \rightarrow n) \oplus S(0, 0, \dots, e(i), \dots, 0)$$

the difference

20

$$\Delta S1(i, e) = S(1 \rightarrow n, i, e) \oplus S(1 \rightarrow n) \quad (18)$$

where

$$\Delta S1(i, e) = S(0, 0, \dots, e(i), \dots, 0) \quad (19)$$

25 for

$$y(t) = 0, \text{ for } t \neq i \text{ and } y(t) = e(i), \text{ for } t = i$$

With equation (19) in equation (18) it follows that

30

$$\Delta S1(i, e) = S((n-i) \rightarrow n, i, e) \oplus S((n-i) \rightarrow n) \quad (20)$$

At the instant $t = i-1$, as yet no error $e(i)$ has occurred in the data word $y'(i)$; it is not until from

the instant $t=i$ that this error $e(i)$ occurs in a k-bit data word.

For the formation of the signature from n data words
5 $y(1), y(2), \dots, y(n)$ with precisely one assumed error
 $e(i)$ in a data word $y'(i)$, we obtain from equations
 (20) and (7)

$$\Delta S1(i, e) = A^{(n-i)} e(i); i \in \{1, 2, \dots, n\} \quad (21)$$

10

Equation (21) is the difference of two MILFSR signatures, namely of the signature of a 1-word faulty data stream T_n at the position i and of the signature of an error-free data stream T_n . The signature difference $\Delta S1(i, e)$ is formed by a procedure in which the faulty data word $y'(i)$ defines the initial state of the MILFSR architecture and is then accumulated $(n-i)$ times in the MILFSR architecture with the inputting of all 0 vectors.

20

Upon transforming equation (21) with equation (16)

$$e(i) = B^{(n-i)} \Delta S1(i, e) \quad (22)$$

25 it becomes evident that the data word $e(i)$ can be calculated as a new signature by a procedure in which the initial state of the second linear automaton circuit $L2$ is set at $\Delta S1(i, e)$ and is then accumulated $(n-i)$ times.

30

According to the invention, inverted MILFSR architectures can thus be used for calculating 1-word errors e in data streams T_n without it being necessary to still have these data streams available at the
35 instant of calculating $e(i)$.

From the equation corresponding to equation (20)

$$\Delta S_2(i, e) = B^{(n-i)} e(i) \quad (23)$$

for the second linear automaton circuit L2, we obtain
 5 with equation (16) analogously to equation (20) the following equation (24). For an assumed 1-word error $e(i)$, the following is obtained from equation (21) for the first linear automaton circuit L1

$$10 \quad e(i) = A^{(n-i)} \Delta S_2(i, e) \quad (24)$$

By equating equations (22) and (24), this results in

$$15 \quad A^{(n-i)} \Delta S_2(i, e) = B^{(n-i)} \Delta S_1(i, e) \quad (25)$$

Thus, if the initial state of the first linear automaton circuit L1 is set at $\Delta S_2(i, e)$ or, respectively, if the initial state of the second linear automaton circuit L2 is set at $\Delta S_1(i, e)$, and if this
 20 value is accumulated $(n-i)$ times, then the error $e(i)$ results as a new signature or as a new state in the case of both linear automaton circuits L1 and L2.

In this case, the value for the position i of the
 25 faulty data word $y'(i)$ must lie between 1 and n.

If the equality of the expressions $A^{(n-i)} \Delta S_2(i, e)$ and $B^{(n-i)} \Delta S_1(i, e)$ results for none of the values i , $1 \leq i \leq n$, in equation (25), then an error $e(i)$ which
 30 corrupts only the position i of the data word is not present, but rather an error which has corrupted at least two different positions in the data stream.

If $\Delta S_1 \neq 0$ results, then it is possible, by resetting the
 35 linear automaton circuits L1 and L2 to ΔS_2 and ΔS_1 , respectively, and by comparing the signatures accumulated in each step, to detect the position i of the faulty data word $y'(i)$ and the error $e(i)$ after $n-i$

steps on both signatures or states. The signatures of the two linear automaton circuits L_1 and L_2 are equal in this case to

$$z^1(n-i) = z^2(n-i) \quad (26),$$

where z^1 and z^2 are L-dimensional state vectors of the linear automaton circuits L_1 and L_2 , and where $z^1(n-i)$ and $z^2(n-i)$ are the states of the two linear automaton circuits L_1 and L_2 after $n-i$ clock cycles.

Given a serial data input, the following holds true for the two linear automaton circuits L1 and L2

$$y_i(t) = 0 \text{ for } i \neq 1 \quad (L1) \quad (27)$$

$$y_i(t) = 0 \text{ for } i \neq k \quad (L2)$$

In this case, k denotes the number of bits of a data word $y(i)$ from the data stream T_n .

20 The comparison for identity of the signatures calculated back in this MILFSR architecture produces, for an assumed error e in the data word i after $n-1$ steps,

$$z^1(p-i) = z^2(L+1-p+i) \quad (29)$$

Figure 5 shows a sequential scheme 5 for determining signature differences ΔS_1 and ΔS_2 from a measurement data stream T_n .

Situated at the top side of the sequential scheme 5 is a measurement data word line 51, on which is present a data stream T_n comprising n successive data words $y(1), \dots, y(i-1), y'(i), y(i+1), \dots, y(n)$ each having an identical data word length of k bits. In this case, the data word $y'(i)$ represents a faulty data word.

The measurement data word line 51 forks into two branches, the left-hand one of which has a first coder C1, the first linear automaton circuit L1, L exclusive-OR gates XOR_{L1} , which are combined in the form 5 of an XOR gate having the word width L, and also a first output 52, at which the signature difference ΔS_1 is output. The right-hand branch comprises a second coder C2, the second linear automaton circuit L2, L exclusive-OR gates XOR_{L2} , which are likewise combined in 10 the form of an XOR gate having the word width L, and also a second output 53, at which the signature difference ΔS_2 is output.

15 The respective L first inputs of the L exclusive-OR gates XOR_{L1} are formed by the outputs of the first linear automaton circuit L1, and the first inputs of the L exclusive-OR gates XOR_{L2} are formed by the outputs of the second linear automaton circuit L2.

20 Good signatures of the two linear automaton circuits L1 and L2 are provided at the second inputs of the L exclusive-OR gates XOR_{L1} and XOR_{L2} by means of digital circuits that are not shown in figure 5. Said good signatures can be determined for a known data stream 25 T_n . This is known to the person skilled in the art.

30 The measurement data stream T_n is input via the first coder C1 into the first linear automaton circuit L1 and, in parallel with this, via the second coder C2 into the second linear automaton circuit L2.

35 The data stream T_n respectively present is transformed uniformly by means of the coders C1 and C2. As a result, it is possible also to compare data words $y(1)$, ..., $y(n)$ of different data streams T_n with one another.

The data words $u^1(1), \dots, u^1(n)$ and $u^2(1), \dots, u^2(n)$ coded by the coders C1 and C2 are compacted to form signatures S1 and S2 by means of the linear automaton circuits L1 and L2, respectively.

5

The actual signatures S1 and S2 thus determined are then compared with the known good signatures in the exclusive-OR gates XOR_{L1} and XOR_{L2} . The respective L exclusive-OR gates XOR_{L1} and XOR_{L2} provide the signature differences $\Delta S1$ and $\Delta S2$ at the outputs 52 and 53.

10 According to the invention, these signature differences $\Delta S1$ and $\Delta S2$ can be used to ascertain whether errors have occurred in the case of the data stream T_n 15 respectively under consideration.

If the data stream T_n has precisely one faulty data word $y'(i)$, it is possible to directly determine both the position i of the faulty data word and the error 20 $e(i)$ of the faulty data word in the data stream.

The function of the first coder C1 is described precisely below.

25 The coder C1, for $i=1, \dots, n$, codes the data word $y(i)$ having the data word length of k bits into a coded data word $u^1(i)$, $u^1(i)=\text{Cod1}(y(i))$ having the word width of K1 bits. In this case, Cod1 designates the coding function of the first coder C1.

30

If $y'(i)$ is the component-by-component XOR sum of two k bit wide data words $y(i)$ and $e(i)$, namely

$$y'(i) = y(i) \oplus e(i)$$

35

then the following is to hold true for the coding function Cod1

$$\begin{aligned} u^1'(i) &= \text{Cod1}(y'(i)) = \text{Cod1}(y(i) \oplus e(i)) \\ &= \text{Cod1}(y(i)) \oplus f_1(e(i)) = u^1(i) \oplus f_1(e(i)) \end{aligned}$$

so that a function f_1^{-1} where

5

$$f_1^{-1}(f_1(e)) = e$$

holds true for all binary data words e having the word width k that are possible as errors.

10

If the coder C_1 realizes a linear block code with k information positions and with (K_1-k) check positions, then the following holds true

15

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Cod1}(y'(i)) &= \text{Cod1}(y(i) \oplus e(i)) \\ &= \text{Cod1}(y(i)) \oplus \text{Cod1}(e(i)) \end{aligned}$$

and it holds true that

20

$$f_1 = \text{Cod1}.$$

Linear block codes are described e.g. in document [1].

If e.g. $k = 3$ and $K_1 = 5$ and it holds true that

25

$$\begin{aligned} C_1(y(i)) &= C_1([y_1(i), y_2(i), y_3(i)]^T) \\ &= [y_1(i), y_2(i), y_3(i), 1, 1]^T, \end{aligned}$$

then it holds true for $y'(i) = y(i) \oplus e(i)$ that:

30

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Cod1}(y'(i)) &= \text{Cod1}(y(i) \oplus e(i)) \\ &= \text{Cod1}(y(i)) \oplus f(e(i)) \end{aligned}$$

where

35

$$f_1(e(i)) = f_1([e_1(i), e_2(i), e_3(i)]^T) = [e_1(i), e_2(i), e_3(i), 0, 0]$$

and

$$f_1^{-1}([e_1(i), e_2(i), e_3(i), 0, 0]^T) = e_1(i), e_2(i), e_3(i).$$

The function of the first linear automaton circuit L1 is described in detail below.

- 5 In the description below, the state matrix of the linear automaton circuits L1 and L2 may assume an arbitrary size and is not fixed at n=4, as described above. A further difference in the description below is that the input values of the linear automaton circuits
- 10 L1 and L2 are coded data words $u^1(1), \dots, u^1(n)$ and $u^2(1), \dots, u^2(n)$, respectively, which have been coded by the first coder C1 and by the second coder C2, respectively, from the data words $y(1), \dots, y(n)$.
- 15 The first linear automaton circuit L1 is formed over the field GF(2) and has a K1-dimensional state vector $z^1(t)$. $K1 \geq k$ holds true in this case.

- 20 The first linear automaton circuit L1 is generally described by the equation

$$z^1(t+1) = A \cdot z^1(t) \oplus u^1(t) \quad (\text{I})$$

- 25 In this case, $z^1(t)$ and $z^1(t+1)$ are K1-dimensional binary state vectors at the discrete instant t and t+1. $u^1(t)$ is the coded data word that is input at the instant t.

- A is a uniquely reversible binary ($K1 \times K1$) matrix.
- 30 The addition and the multiplication of the binary values in equation (I) are effected modulo 2.

- 35 After the data stream T_n comprising the n data words $y(1), \dots, y(n)$ has been input into the first coder C1 and after the coded data words $u^1(1), \dots, u^1(n)$ have

been input into the first linear automaton circuit L1, the first linear automaton circuit L1 undergoes transition from an initial state $z^1(1)$ to the state $z^1(n+1)$. The following holds true in this case:

5

$$z^1(n+1) = A^n z^1(1) \oplus \sum_{j=1}^{n-1} A^{n-j} u^1(j)$$

In this case,

10 $z^1(n+1) = S(L1, u^1(1), \dots, u^1(n))$

where $u^1(i) = \text{Cod}_1(y(i))$ is designated as the signature of the data sequence $y(1), \dots, y(n)$ of the first linear automaton circuit L1.

15

The initial state $z^1(1)$ shall hereinafter be equal to the K_1 -dimensional zero vector 0. For carrying out the method according to the invention it is not necessary for the initial state $z^1(1)$ to be formed as the zero vector. This assumption is made here in order to simplify the subsequent calculations.

25 If there is an error $e(i)$ in the i-th data word of the data stream, then at the i-th instant, instead of the correct data word $y(i)$, the faulty data word

$$y'(i) = y(i) \oplus e(i)$$

30 is input into the first coder C1. In this case, the error $e(i)$ is a k -dimensional binary vector. Those components of this binary vector which assume the value one designate the positions of the faulty bits in the i-th data word.

35 If only the i-th data word is faulty and all the other data words are correct, then the following holds true

where $z^1(1) = 0$ when the data stream that is only faulty in the i -th data word is input into the first coder C1 where

$$\begin{aligned} 5 \quad u^{1'}(i) &= \text{Cod1}(y'(i)) \\ &= \text{Cod1}(y(i) \oplus e(i)) \\ &= \text{Cod1}(u(i)) \oplus f_1(e(i)) \\ &= u^1(i) \oplus f_1(e(i)) \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} 10 \quad z^{1'}(n+1) &= \sum_{j=1}^n A^{n-i} u^1(j) \oplus A^{n-1} \cdot f_1(e(i)) && (\text{II}) \\ &= z^1(n+1) \oplus A^{n-i} f_1(e(i)) && (\text{III}) \end{aligned}$$

and hence

$$\begin{aligned} 15 \quad A^{n-i} \cdot f_1(e(i)) &= z^{1'}(n+1) \oplus z^1(n+1) \\ &= S(L_1, u^1(1), \dots, u^{1'}(i), \dots, \\ &\quad u^1(n)) \\ &\quad \oplus S(L_1, u^1(1), \dots, u^1(i), \\ &\quad \dots, u^1(n)) \\ 20 \quad &= \Delta S_1 && (\text{IV}) \end{aligned}$$

For the case where $f(e(i)) = \text{Cod1}(e(i))$, the following is obtained

$$25 \quad A^{n-i} \text{Cod1}(e(i)) = \Delta S_1 \quad (\text{V})$$

For the case where $\text{Cod1}(y(i)) = y(i)$, $i=1, \dots, n$ holds true, the following results

$$30 \quad A^{n-i} \cdot e(i) = \Delta S_1 \quad (\text{VI})$$

The function of the second coder C2 is described precisely below.

35
For $i=1, \dots, n$, the second coder C2 codes the data word $y(i)$ having the data word length of k bits into

the coded data word $u^2(i)$, $u^2(i) = \text{Cod2}(y(i))$. The coded data word $u^2(i)$ has a word width of K_2 bits. In this case, Cod2 designates the coding function of the second coder C2.

5

If $y'(i)$ is the component-by-component XOR sum of two k bit wide words $y(i)$ and $e(i)$.

10

then the following is intended to hold true for the coding function Cod2

15

$$\begin{aligned} u^{2'}(i) &= \text{Cod2}(y'(i)) \\ &= \text{Cod2}(y(i) \oplus e(i)) \\ &= \text{Cod2}(y(i)) \oplus f_2(e(i)) \\ &= u^2(i) \oplus f_2(e(i)) \end{aligned}$$

20

so that there is a function f_2^{-1} where $f_2^{-1}(f_2(e)) = e$ for all binary data words e having the word width k which may be taken into consideration as errors.

The function of the second linear automaton circuit L2 is described in detail below.

25

The second linear automaton circuit L2 is formed over the field GF(2) and has a K_2 -dimensional state vector $z^2(t)$. $K_2 \geq k$ holds true in this case.

30

The second linear automaton circuit L2 is described by the equation

$$z^2(t+1) = B \cdot z^2(t) u^2(t) \quad (\text{VII})$$

35

where $z^2(t)$ and $z^2(t+1)$ are K_2 -dimensional binary state vectors at the discrete instants t and $t+1$. $u^2(t)$ is the coded data word that is input at the instant t . B where $B \neq A$ is a uniquely reversible binary ($K_2 \times K_2$)

matrix. The addition and multiplication in (VII) are effected modulo 2.

After the data stream T_n comprising the n data words
 5 $y(1), \dots, y(n)$ has been input into the second coder C_2 and after the coded data words $u^2(1), \dots, u^2(n)$ have been input into the second linear automaton circuit L_2 , the second linear automaton circuit L_2 undergoes transition from its initial state $z^2(1)$ to the state
 10 $z^2(n+1)$

$$z^2(n+1) = B^n z^2(1) \oplus \sum_{j=1}^n B^{n-j} u^2(j) \quad (\text{VIII})$$

In this case,

15 $z^2(n+1) = S(L_2, u^2(1), \dots, u^2(n))$

where $u^2(i) = \text{Cod}_2(y(i))$ is designated as the signature of the data stream $y(1), \dots, y(n)$ in the second linear
 20 automaton circuit L_2 .

The K_1 -dimensional zero vector 0 subsequently forms the initial state $z^2(1)$.

- 25 If there is then an error $e(i)$ in the i -th data word of the data stream, then at the i -th instant, instead of the correct data word $y(i)$, the faulty data word $y'(i) = y(i) \oplus e(i)$ is input into the second coder Cod_2 .
- 30 If only the i -th data word is faulty and all the other data words are correct, then there holds true, where $z^2(1) = 0$, where

$$\begin{aligned} u^{2'}(i) &= \text{Cod2}(y(i) \oplus e(i)) \\ &= u^2(i) \oplus f_2(e(i)) \quad (\text{analogous to (III)}) \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} z^{2'}(n+1) &= \sum_{i=1}^n B^{n-i} u^2(j) + B^{n-i} f_2(e(i)) \\ &= z^2(n+1) \oplus B^{n-i} f_2(e(i)) \end{aligned} \quad (\text{IX})$$

and where

$$\begin{aligned} z^{2'}(n+1) \oplus z^2(n+1) &= S(L2, u^2(1), \dots, u^{2'}(i), \dots, u^2(n)) \\ &\quad \oplus S(L2, u^2(1), \dots, u^2(i), \dots, u^2(n)) \\ &= \Delta S2 \end{aligned}$$

5

the following equation:

$$\Delta S2 = B^{n-i} f_2(e(i)) \quad (\text{X})$$

- 10 For the case where $f_2(e(i)) = \text{Cod2}(e(i))$ the following holds true instead of (X)

$$\Delta S2 = B^{n-i} \text{Cod2}(e(i)) \quad (\text{XI})$$

- 15 For the case where $\text{Cod2}(e(i)) = e(i)$ holds true, the following results

$$\Delta S2 = B^{n-i} \cdot e(i) \quad (\text{XII})$$

If the results of the processing of the data stream in the linear automaton circuits L1 and L2 are combined,

then the following are obtained from equations (IV) and (X)

$$e(i) = f_1^{-1}(A^{i-n}\Delta S1) \quad (\text{XIV})$$

$$e(i) = f_2^{-1}(B^{i-n}\Delta S2) \quad (\text{XV})$$

5

which result in the following equation:

$$f_1^{-1}(A^{i-n}\Delta S2) = f_2^{-1}(B^{i-n}\Delta S2) \quad (\text{XVI})$$

10 By means of the equation (XVI) it is possible to calculate i , $i \in \{1, \dots, n\}$, that is to say the position i of the faulty data word $y'(i)$.

15 The value for i from equation (XVI) can be calculated e.g. iteratively by calculating for $i = 1, 2, \dots$ the value of the left-hand and right-hand sides of equation (XVI) until both sides match.

20 If the value for i has been determined in this way, then it is possible, by means of equation (XIV), also to directly determine the value for $e(i)$, that is to say the position of the faulty data word in the data stream.

25 Figure 6 shows a flowchart 6 for illustrating the method according to the invention for detecting an error $e(i)$ in a data word $y'(i)$.

30 The first flowchart 6 provides a total of seven method steps 61-67, the method steps 62 and 65 being formed as decision fields and the remaining method steps being formed as execution fields.

The first method step 61 involves generating the signature differences ΔS_1 and ΔS_2 and also a data stream T_n , as is illustrated e.g. in figures 1 and 2. Said data stream T_n may be formed from a sequence of 5 measurement data of a DUT.

As described thoroughly with reference to figure 5, said data stream T_n is fed via the first coder C_1 to the first linear automaton circuit L_1 and, at the same 10 time as this, via the second coder C_1 to the second linear automaton circuit L_2 . From the signatures generated by the linear automaton circuits L_1 and L_2 and from the good signatures provided, the exclusive-OR gates XOR_{L_1} and XOR_{L_2} determine the signature 15 differences ΔS_1 and ΔS_2 from the difference between the good and poor signatures in accordance with equation (1) and equation (2) and provide the signature differences ΔS_1 and ΔS_2 at the outputs 52 and 53.

In the second method step 62, the signature difference 20 ΔS_1 present at the first output 52 is compared with zero. If the signature difference ΔS_1 is equal to zero, this means that no error could be detected in the data stream T_n . In this case, the method continues with the 25 checking of the next data stream T_n . If the signature difference ΔS_1 is not equal to zero, this means that one or arbitrarily many faulty data words $y(1), \dots, y(n)$ are faulty. In this case, the method continues with the method step 63.

30 In the method step 63, the states $z(t=n+1)$ of the linear automaton circuits L_1 and L_2 are in each case reset to the values of the respective other signature differences ΔS_1 and ΔS_2 .

35 The method step 64 involves calculating back for $y(t)=0$, to be precise the linear automaton circuits L_1 and L_2 are accumulated in $(n-i)$ steps for $y(t)=0$ and

the states according to equation (26) are checked for identity. This process of calculating back is known to the person skilled in the art and need not be explained any further here.

5

The method step 65 involves checking whether a solution exists. If this is not the case, then more than one data word $y(1), \dots, y(n)$ of the data stream T_n is faulty.

10

If a solution does exist, then the data word $y'(i)$ and the error $e(i)$ are calculated in the method step 66.

15

In this case, firstly the data word $y'(i)$ is determined from the number of traversed cycles of the linear automaton circuit L1 and L2.

The error $e(i)$ is then calculated from equation (30):

$$e(i) = z(t) \text{ for } t=i, 1 \leq i \leq N \quad (30)$$

20

$z(t=i)$ is the state of the two linear automaton circuits L1 and L2 at the instant $t=i$.

25

In a further exemplary embodiment, it is also possible to check two serial, that is to say successive, data streams T_n .

30

In this case, the left-hand branch of the measurement data word line 51 is traversed twice in succession and the right-hand branch of the measurement data word line 51 is not traversed at all, in the second pass the first coder C1 being replaced by the second coder C2 if the first coder C1 differs from the second coder C2 and the first linear automaton circuit L1 with the state matrix A being replaced by the second linear automaton

35

circuit L2 with the state matrix B, $B \neq A$, which may be effected technically e.g. in a simple manner using multiplexers.

- 5 If the method is realized on a computer system, then that program part which realizes the first linear automaton circuit L1 is quite simply to be replaced in the second pass by that program part which realizes the second linear automaton circuit L2. Likewise, if the
10 coders C1 and C2 differ from one another, the function Cod1 of the first coder C1 in the first pass is to be replaced by the function Cod2 of the second coder C2 in the second pass.
- 15 In this case, S1 is the signature calculated in the first pass and S2 is the signature calculated in the second pass. The method essentially matches the method described in the previous exemplary embodiment.
- 20 The implementation of the method is readily possible for a person skilled in the art on the basis of the information given in this patent specification.

25 The following document has been cited in the context of this patent specification:

[1] Rohling H., Einführung in die Informations- und Codierungstheorie, Teubner Verlag, 1995
[Introduction to information and coding theory]

30 In order to unambiguously identify and diagnose an error $e(i)$ at the position i of the data stream T_n , it is, surprisingly, not necessary for the feedback polynomial to be primitive or irreducible. It actually
35 suffices here for the matrix B to be the inverse of the matrix A.

Thus, the value of the position of the error i , which must naturally occur in the data stream from 1 to n , is determined from the equation

$$f_1^{-1}(A^{i-n} \Delta S_1) = f_2^{-1}(B^{i-n} \Delta S_2)$$

and where then $= A^{-1}$ as

$$f_1^{-1}(A^{i-n} \Delta S_1) = f_2^{-1}(A^{n-i} \Delta S_2).$$

5

Moreover, for $e(i)$, the faulty bit positions in the faulty i -th data word, the following results

$$e(i) = f_1^{-1}(A^{i-n} \Delta S_1).$$

10

If the matrix A has an inverse matrix A^{-1} , then $A^k e(i) \neq 0$ holds true for $e(i) \neq 0$ for any k . Thus, and because a linear superposition principle holds true for linear shift registers, an individual error $e(i)$ which has corrupted different bits at the position i can never be masked. By virtue of the fact that the signature is furthermore also provided in two different multi-input signature registers with mutually inverse matrices A and $B = A^{-1}$, it is even possible to determine the position i and the value $e(i)$ exactly.

A masking of errors in a signature which is identical to the good signature can only occur with a vanishingly small probability if a plurality of errors occur at a plurality of bit positions which cancel out randomly in their signature. In the case of a single faulty position this is not possible, as explained.

30 The probability, when a plurality of errors are present, of the equation

$$f_1^{-1}(A^{i-n} \Delta S_1) = f_2^{-1}(A^{n-i} \Delta S_2)$$

having a solution for i where $1 \leq i \leq n$ is negligibly
5 small and if it happens that no solution can be found
for i , this means that there is no individual error
 $e(i)$ present which has only faulty bits at the position
 i in the data stream. The property whereby the feedback
polynomial is intended to be primitive is an
10 advantageous configuration for which the error masking
probability that is inherently already practically
negligibly small is especially small for errors which
relate to a plurality of positions in the data stream
 T_n .

15